

# CONNECTIONS

## talent central news

### Welcome everyone to our first Talent Central Newsletter of 2021.

The year has seen us build on the foundations laid in 2020 with even more schools enrolling students in the Talent Central WorkReady Course. With enrolments from Year 10 through to Year 13 students the emphasis continues to be on building the soft skills that are essential in all areas of life. Alongside these soft skills Talent Central has developed sector pathways that demonstrate specific technical skills required for employment. These skills are translated into everyday activities to support students in their understanding of what employers want and how to demonstrate these attributes when looking for a job. One of the things we hear frequently is that employers want employees who know how to drive and we are working to assist in this space. We have been fortunate to have been provided a car by PTS Logistics for use to assist students with driving lessons. Schools who have connected a significant number of students to the WorkReady course have been offered this service. Currently we are working with Feilding High School, Queen Elizabeth College and Tararua College. These schools have access to lessons one day a week for 6 students. To date this is progressing well with students relishing the opportunity to progress towards their restricted driver's licence.

It's still early in the year but already we have had a 50% increase in the number of employers who are prepared to provide Industry visits for students. Access to these employers enables Talent Central to arrange groups of up to 10 students to visit a business to give them an opportunity to experience how a workplace operates and what it would be like to work in these businesses. The small group size enables businesses to interact with students and engage in real life tasks and activities.

One of the most powerful interactions is the opportunity for students to talk to staff and learn the story of how they came to be working in the business and to share their experiences and knowledge. These interactions form the groundwork for students to be invited back for work experience and in some instances offered work or apprenticeships. The Industry visits have proved the most efficient way of connecting our local young people to prospective employers and work opportunities.

Massey University has come on board and will be providing opportunities for students to visit and interact with the different faculties and undertake farm visits. These visits will provide a window into the academic opportunities available and how they connect to workplaces and jobs. These visits will be like our industry visits with up to 10 students attending. These small groups will participate in hands on learning as precursor to study requirements.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their support in enabling our local young people the opportunity to visit workplaces and get experience.



Mark Wootton  
CEO

## Activities

March was a big month for Talent Central. We participated in the Rural Games held in the Square in Palmerston North. Eleven schools attended this event with 239 students from year 9 to year 13 participating in events and engaging with employers and organisations. The Talent Central tent had a continuous flow of students and we were able to advise them and their teachers on the benefits of our WorkReady Course.

The Agri Quest Challenge was once again a feature of the Central Districts Field Days. Talent Central, with the support of Stuff Events hosted 244 students from 9 high schools from as far away as New Plymouth and Napier to participate in this event. Fifteen organisations provided questions for the Challenge with prizes being allocated to students who completed all the questions. Our thanks to those organisations who participated and provided prizes.

Talent Central also participated in an employment Expo day hosted by Cornerstone Christian School attended by year 10 to 13 students. Cornerstone is a supporter of the WorkReady Course and we were able to talk to students about their experiences and the industry visits they would be interested in.

Industry visits have started again for 2021. Our thanks to FMG, Acrow, Bidfood and AFC Motorcycles for being the first participants in the program for 2021. Starting term 2 we have 14 industry/workplace visits planned with everything from Childcare, Beauty Salons, Engineering Workshops, Massey University and Farms.

Talent Central in collaboration with Manawatu Chamber of Commerce will be holding a BA5 event on the 4<sup>th</sup> of May at our office Two36 (236) Broadway Avenue starting at 5:30pm. This will be an opportunity for school representatives to meet and mingle with the businesses connected to the Chamber of Commerce and Talent Central.



Students had a busy time at AFC Motorcycles learning about all the activities of the business including retail, sales and repairs.



The visit to Bidfood provided an opportunity for students to see how a large warehouse and distribution centre works.



The Talent Central site at the Rural Games held in the Square Palmerston North gave students a chance to meet us and find out more about the WorkReady Course.

## Our Partners

### Manawatu Chamber of Commerce

We are connected directly to the Young Chamber members who provide support and pathways for Talent Central to access businesses for Industry Visits and Work Experience. The Young Chamber are tasked with engaging with local business predominantly in Retail and Hospitality to identify businesses willing to provide opportunities for young people. To match the size and scale of these businesses the group is reduced to no more than 5 students. This enables the businesses to interact individually with students and provide a real experience of what the job is.

### The Central Skills Hub

Talent Central and the Central Skills Hub partner in supporting roles based predominantly in the Civil Construction Sector. The Skills Hub is connected to all the major projects employers and this provides opportunities for students to undertake workplace visits. The Skills Hub and Talent Central have created a new role to support businesses with tender preparations for the large projects within our region. This is a new initiative to support local businesses wanting to be involved in these projects.

### Central Economic Development Agency (CEDA)

CEDA's research has indicated that a lack of talent remains the biggest barrier to doing business in Manawatu. 57% of businesses identified this talent shortage to be limiting their ability to grow and expand. Talent Central in collaboration with CEDA has developed pathways for schools and students to be work ready. These pathways give a clear description of what a person requires to be work ready when starting their working life. The pathways contain information to support subject choice in school and the prerequisites for starting a job.

### Manfeild Park Trust's National Driver Training Centre (NDTC)

NDTC and Talent Central share a common goal to support as many young people as possible to gain their driver's licence. Talent Central's connections within schools can provide a pathway to NDTC for students to move through all the stages and to ultimately achieve their licence. Talent Central also provides a referral process for students wanting their forklift licence.

2021 is full of opportunities and Talent Central is here to support you.

For more information about our WorkReady Course for schools contact [enquiries@talentcentral.ac.nz](mailto:enquiries@talentcentral.ac.nz)